

## REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

MEETING

DATE: 9/3/03

15'

**AGENDA SECTION:**  
Letters and Petitions**ORIGINATING DEPT:**  
ADMINISTRATION**ITEM NO.**

C-3

**ITEM DESCRIPTION:** Representatives of Local 21 Request to Be Heard  
RE: Union Vote at Radisson Hotel**PREPARED BY:**  
S. KVENVOLD

Representatives of Local 21 have requested an opportunity to appear before the City Council to discuss their union organizing activities at the Radisson Hotel.

Apparently there will be a vote on whether some of the Radisson employees should join Local 21 and Local 21 is not satisfied with the conditions of the election (according to my limited knowledge of this matter).

I believe that Local 21 representatives will request that the Mayor and City Council adopt a resolution of support for their position.

I did indicate to the Local 21 representative that the Mayor and City Council may not take any position on this matter since the Mayor/Council would not normally be involved in the private sector labor negotiations or union organizing activities.

**COUNCIL ACTION:** Motion by: \_\_\_\_\_ Second by: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

14  
August 8, 2003

Mr. Stevan Kvenvold  
City of Rochester  
201 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE  
Rochester, MN 55904

Dear Mr Kvenvold:

This week, I met with Jamie Gulley, Staff Organizer for the Hotel, Hospital, Restaurant and Tavern Employees Union, Local 21, along with five members of Ward 6 who work as housekeepers and laundry employees of the Radisson Hotel in downtown Rochester. Four of the five workers were Somali and Sudanese. Even though all spoke English proficiently enough to share their concerns, in attendance was also an interpreter, Abdullah Hared, Executive Director of the Somali Community Resettlement Services.

The primary concern expressed was that over 70% (15/22) of the housekeepers and laundry workers signed a petition requesting representation by Local 21, which was denied by the General Manager, Mr. Scott Maver. According to the workers, their appeal for fairness has not been heard.

- They are required to clean 19 rooms in six hours. The Union requirement is to clean 16 rooms in 8 hours.
- Benefits are not provided, as the scheduled work time is less than 32 hours.
- Breaks, including lunch, are limited to less than originally authorized.
- Hours worked are not recorded accurately
- Supervisors are verbally disrespectful. They believe this is partially due to the fact that they speak English as a second language, although all workers speak English in the workplace.
- Management has threatened them with loss of employment if they spoke with the Union.

As I understand it, this issue will come forward to the Council for consideration on August 18. As I will be on vacation, I felt it necessary to document my support for the employees' right to join a Union and bargain collectively. I believe that Welsh Companies, the court-appointed receiver for the Radisson, will also support the employees right to Unionize without interference from the management team.

Sandra Means  
City Council Member, Ward 6

Copy to: Mayor Ardele Brede  
City Council  
Dave Blanchard and Jamie Gulley, Local 21